

Maryland Application, Rules and Procedures for State Record Sport Fish Catch Consideration

Maryland DNR maintains state records for sport fish and awards a plaque to anglers whose catch exceeds the current state record or establishes a new species category. Positive identification of the species of fish is mandatory for consideration of state record applications. The catch must be inspected in person by a fisheries biologist from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Immerse the fish in ice water until it can be weighed in order to preserve the weight.

APPLICATION PROCESS: (must be completed within 2 weeks of catch date)

1. **Call 443-569-1381 or 410-260-8325** to report a potential state record catch. You will be asked to provide the following required information:
2. Name, Contact Information and Address of Angler
3. Name of Species Caught
4. Date of Catch
5. Region Caught (Circle One): Atlantic Chesapeake Freshwater
6. Specific Location Caught (As Best Described, Along with Name of Body of Water)
7. Certified Weight
8. Date Fish was Weighed
9. The witnessing scale operator's name, signature and the name of establishment
10. Submit signed application (?) with clear photograph of fish to DNR within two weeks of catch.

State record fish are determined by weight. Make every effort to quickly obtain an accurate certified weight, since dead fish lose weight. Most fishing tackle shops do not have certified scales so call ahead. Other establishments that sell products by weight (for example grocery or mailing/shipping stores) may have a certified scale and be willing to help.

Fish must be legally caught with rod and reel during its open season. From the time that a fish strikes or takes a bait or lure, the angler must hook and fight the fish without the aid of any other person. The reel must be operated manually. Once the leader is brought to the rod tip, more than one person is permitted to help land the fish.

Fish designated as eligible for the Invasive Species component of the Maryland Fishing Challenge (currently Northern Snakehead, Blue Catfish and Flathead Catfish) can be caught and kept by all legal recreational fishing gear including rod and reel, bow and spears.

Fish caught from privately-owned fee fishing waters are not eligible for record consideration.

The fish must be considered trophy sized for DNR to consider opening a new species category for recognition. Thresholds for trophy size are established by DNR using the best data available to create a benchmark weight.

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources reserves the right to investigate the methods used in catching the fish and the accuracy of measuring and weighing. It also reserves the right to reject any application based on the results of the investigation.